

REMARKS

Applicants, their principal representatives in Germany, and the undersigned have carefully reviewed the first Office Action on the merits of December 4, 2003 in the subject U.S. patent application, together with the prior art cited by the Examiner. In response, the claims of the application have been amended. It is believed that the claims now pending in the subject application are patentable. Reexamination and reconsideration of the application, and allowance of the claims is respectfully requested.

In the Office Action of December 4, 2003, the Examiner indicated that documents DE 1 189 562 and DE 1 273 483, which were cited in the Information Disclosure Statement filed with the application, were not considered because copies of these two documents were not included in the materials received by the Examiner. Copies of those two documents are submitted with this Amendment. As indicated by the Examiner, neither of these has an English language abstract or equivalent. Both are discussed in the Information Disclosure Statement that was filed.

Claims 33-35 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the written description requirement. Claims 33-35 were also rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph as being indefinite, essentially as being based on a confusing specification.

The lengthy Substitute Specification has been carefully reviewed by the undersigned in an effort to be able to direct the Examiner's attention to specific

paragraphs which, it is believed, will supply the necessary support for the invention set forth in the currently amended claims 33 and 34 and which support will render those claims definite.

Initially, the Examiner has questioned what constitutes the start and the finish of the drawing-in process. A drawing-in process is one that is used to feed a web, or a plurality of webs or web trains through a section of a printing press prior to operating the printing process in its production mode. Draw-in can be viewed as similar to the process by which film is fed through a projector, prior to starting the projector to show the movie carried on the film. Draw-in is the process by which the web, plurality of webs, web train or the like is or are "threaded" through the rotary printing press, or the section of the rotary printing press, prior to production or operation of the press at its usual speed in its usual manner.

In the case of the subject invention, the longitudinal folding hopper is an intermediate piece of equipment in the rotary printing press. It is after, in a direction of web travel or a production direction, the printing couples. It is before, in the web travel direction the various cutting cylinders and folders which are used to transform an endless web or webs into a plurality of separate sections or signatures, typically newspaper sections.

In the Examiner's discussion of the 112, first paragraph rejection, he notes that the only "separation" discussed in the one contained at paragraph 058 of the substitute specification. That "separation" is not the separating the paper webs from each other,

as recited in claim 33. The discussion at paragraph 058 is directed to the supplying of the plurality of paper webs or the paper web trains to the paper web draw-in device that is used in the claimed method. The paper web draw-in devices discussed in paragraph 058 are used to move the web leading ends to the paper train pre-entry device 111 which, as seen in Fig. 1, is located before the longitudinal folding hopper, generally at 18. The paper web or webs are separated from this draw-in device, which is not shown. The front ends of the paper webs are separated from front fastening devices of these earlier draw-in devices, by cutters, or the like. Again, this separation of the web from this earlier draw-in device is not the separating of the webs from the draw-in device which are used to pull the web or webs through the longitudinal folding hopper.

The claimed method for drawing paper webs into a longitudinal folding hopper, in accordance with the present invention starts when the paper webs are supplied to the train pre-entry device 111. The webs may be individual webs or may be web trains. In each of these web trains, the individual webs may have been permanently joined together. That is not the securing of the paper webs together for draw-in through the longitudinal folding hopper. A discussion of the various types of "locking together" that the webs can be subjected to, prior to their draw-in through the longitudinal folding hopper is set forth at the top of page 28 of the substitute specification. It is to be noted that these webs each constitute one of the webs that are to be secured to each other prior to being drawn into the longitudinal folding hopper.

The draw-in process is used to feed the webs through the segment of the rotary printing press, in this case through the longitudinal folding hopper. The draw-in device, which includes a plurality of spikes that are the paper web holding devices, typically extends to the hopper folding rollers 26 and 27. These hopper folding rollers 26, 27 may, or may not be operational during the draw-in process. In this respect, please refer to paragraph 153 of the Substitute Specification.

Upon completion of the draw-in process, the printing press is placed in its production mode. This is discussed at paragraph 095 of the Substitute Specification. "Production" is understood to mean operation of the rotary printing press to form a product; i.e. to print on the webs, to longitudinally fold the printed webs and to cut and fold the webs into signatures.

The method of effectively connecting the paper webs or trains to each other, for passage through the longitudinal folding hopper, is discussed starting at the bottom of page 32 of the Substitute Specification. The paper web draw-in device can be either finite or endless and has a plurality of spikes which constitute the paper web holding devices.

There is a further discussion, at page 41 of the Substitute Specification of the differences between the draw in process and the production process. As indicated at that section of the Substitute Specification, the draw-in device may include a rail-like guide that will be moved out of the way at the termination of the draw-in process and before the rotary web fed printing press is switched over to production operation. This

is to insure that the draw-in device does not interfere with web passage during the higher speeds of production.

Paragraphs 123-126 of the Substitute Specification discuss the drawing in of paper webs and the securing together of the webs during that draw-in. As was discussed previously, the webs are secured together by the spikes of the draw-in devices, while the webs pass through the longitudinal folding hopper. The spikes are disengaged from the webs at least by the time the webs pass through the rollers 26 and 27. This removal of the spikes from the webs separates the plurality of webs from each other. It must be kept in mind that the term "web" as used in claim 33 is a generic term which includes individual webs and which also includes so-called web trains. It is these web trains, that are comprised of individual webs which have been permanently joined together, prior to their arrival at the longitudinal folding hopper, which the Examiner has asserted are being separated. This is not correct. The "webs" which are being separated after the folding hopper are the generic "webs" which can include individual webs, as well as web trains, as recited at various locations in the specification of the application.

Paragraph 132 of the Substitute Specification discusses the withdrawal of the spikes from the web or web train when the web or web train passes through the hopper insertion rollers 26 and 27. Note again that the draw-in device will be moved out of the path of web travel upon the completion of the draw-in procedure and before the higher speed travel of the web or webs during production operation.

There is further discussion at paragraphs 152 and 153 of the Substitute Specification with respect to the webs, which may be permanently locked together as web trains, also being connected together by the spikes during draw in of the webs through the folding hopper. Paragraph 154 again recites that these spikes move out of the movement path of the train over the hopper insertion plate once the draw-in has been completed.

Paragraph 158 of the Substitute Specification further describes the method set forth in currently amended claim 33. As recited, the paper web or webs or train are threaded on the spikes of the paper web draw in device. These spikes are retracted once the web reaches the insertion gap between the driven hopper folding rollers 26 and 27. At that point, the hopper folding rollers take over the conveyance of the web.

A discussion of the displacement of the spikes on the paper web draw-in device, at the conclusion of the draw-in process, is set forth at paragraph 169 of the Substitute Specification. When the draw-in process is completed, there are no spikes, or paper web holding devices in the portion of the paper web movement path along the hopper insertion plate 21.

It is believed that currently amended claim 33 contains only subject matter which is properly described in the Substitute Specification of the application. While the specification is rather lengthy and may not be as well organized as it could be, it is believed that reading of at least the paragraphs discussed above, will clearly demonstrate that the inventors, at the time the specification was filed, were in

possession of the claimed invention. As discussed above, it must be understood that the draw-in process is done for a finite length of time and is done to feed webs through a section of the press in advance of the operation of the press in a production phase. The webs to be drawn in can be a plurality of individual webs; a plurality of groups of webs, with the individual webs in each group being locked together; or a combination of individual webs and groups of webs. The webs are drawn through the folding hopper while they are secured together by the paper web holding devices of the paper web draw-in device. Once the webs have been drawn through the folding hopper, the holding devices are separated from the webs. This separation is accomplished prior to production operation of the printing press. Such separation of the holding devices from the webs causes the webs to return to their configurations in which they arrived at the folding hopper in.

Claims 33 and 34 are also believed to comply with 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph. It is believed that the specification of the subject application is sufficiently clear to provide support for currently amended claims 33 and 34. As discussed above, the drawing in process is recited in claims 33 and 34 in connection with the movement of paper webs through a longitudinal folding hopper. Other web drawing-in devices are used to bring the web, webs or web trains to the slide plate 11 of the folding hopper.

The claimed draw-in device is only usable with the longitudinal folding hopper. The drawing in process for the folding hopper starts when the web, webs or web trains are delivered to the slide plate 11 by the prior draw-in devices. The draw-in process for

the folding hopper terminates when the webs have been passed through the folding hopper and are taken over by the folding apparatus 116. This is clearly disclosed in the Substitute Specification, as discussed above. The drawing-in process includes delivery of the webs at least to the folding rollers of the folding assembly 116. The folding rollers themselves may or may not engage the plurality of webs which are being drawn into the folding hopper portion of the rotary printing press. The paper webs are separated from each other after the drawing-in process which process is more time based than space or location based. Once the webs have been drawn through the folding hopper, and have been taken over by the folding apparatus, the web draw-in through the longitudinal folding hopper is terminated. The separation of the paper webs from each other occurs when the paper webs are separated from the paper web holding devices of the paper web draw-in device. As discussed in the specification of the application, this separation can occur prior to the webs reaching the folding rollers or after the webs have reached the folding rollers. The point of separation of the webs from the paper web holding devices is a function of the structure of the traction means which are used to pull the paper webs through the longitudinal folding hopper. While the paper webs are passed between the folding rollers during the web draw in process, the actual folding of the webs, by operation of the folding rollers, is a production aspect of the disclosed invention. During draw-in, the plurality of webs are threaded through the rotary web fed printing press. This threading in or drawing-in only occurs at slow speed and is over once the web is completely threaded through the press and the press

is put into its production mode. The draw-in of the webs, in their secured together fashion, insures that the individual webs or web trains will stay in proper registration with each other. Claim 33 as currently amended is thus believed to comply with 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph.

Claim 34 is also believed to comply with 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph. It has been amended to clarify that the webs include paper web starts which can be connected to previously drawn-in paper webs with the resultant paper web train being drawn into the longitudinal folding hopper. The paper web starts are placed against paper webs which are already in the folding hopper or the feed table to the folding hopper. The intent of this claim is to recite a process where webs from different press components can be combined in the folding hopper or on the feed table of the folding hopper before they are drawn into the longitudinal folding hopper.

The various prior art references cited by the Examiner in the Office Action, but not applied against the claims, have been reviewed. Since they were not relied on in the rejections of the claims, no further discussion thereof is believed to be required.

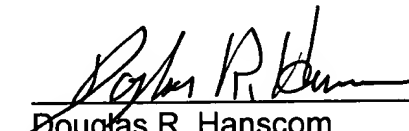
SUMMARY

Claims 1-32 were previously cancelled. Claims 33 and 34 are currently amended. Claims 35-62 are currently cancelled. It is believed that the claims now pending in the subject application comply with 35 U.S.C.112, first and second paragraphs and that they are patentable over the prior art of record. Allowance of the claims, and passage of the application to issue is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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